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Ellet Joseph Waggoner

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1898

June 21, 1898

“A Lesson in Obedience” The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 75, 25.

EJW

E. J. Waggoner

Present Truth.

Many people imagine that the times when quiet, unoffending people could be made to suffer real persecution for their loyalty to God and His Word, are in the past, and that men in these days are too enlightened to persecute their fellow-men for conscience' sake; but we have had under close observation for nearly a year a case which shows that all the elements of religious persecution are everywhere present as much as they ever were, and that more extended and relentless persecution than has ever yet been known is not only possible, but is highly probable, yes, more, is actually inevitable, since careful and systematic preparations are being made for it. The case in question is highly interesting and most instructive, and as the whole affair is now ended, we will give a brief account of it.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.1*

NARRATIVE OF THE CASE

Early in 1897 Christen Rasmussen, a young man nineteen years of age, from Hurup, Denmark, was called to perform the military service that is demanded of every able-bodied young man. At that time he was not converted, but during a short visit at his home he gave himself to the Lord, accepting Christ as his Saviour, and fully decided to obey his heavenly Master in all things, according to the Sacred Word. This was no mere formal matter with him, as his subsequent history shows.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.2*

He should have presented himself at military headquarters at one o'clock, April 10, 1897, but as that day was the seventh day of the

week, the Sabbath according to the commandment of the Lord, to whose service he had given himself, he did not put in an appearance until after sunset. For this seeming dilatoriness he received a reprimand, and was thereafter assigned to his duty.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.3*

During the week he made a request to the captain, to be exempted from service on Sabbath days, but the answer was that nothing could be done for him in that direction. The young man, however, had no question in his own mind as to whether the king of Denmark or the King of the universe had the first claim upon his service.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.4*

Accordingly, the next Sabbath morning when the soldiers appeared for inspection, he remained in his room reading his Bible. A corporal came with orders for him to take his place, but he answered, "I cannot, because it is the Lord's Sabbath." Then a lieutenant came, and commanded him to take his place in the ranks, but he replied, "I cannot." "Why not?" said the lieutenant. "Because it is the Sabbath." Finally he accompanied the lieutenant outside, but could not be induced to take his place in the ranks.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.5*

NO PLACE FOR GOD'S LAW

He was brought to the captain, who said, "Why do you not take your place?" "Because the Lord has said, The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work." "Well, you are a soldier, and must obey; nothing of that kind is taken into consideration here. Take your place," said captain. "I cannot, sir." Without further parley a sergeant was ordered to take "No. 52" to prison, which was done.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.6*

Before the military court he had nothing else to answer than this: "The God who created heaven and earth has said, 'On the seventh day, which is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, thou shalt do no work,' and I cannot do anything other than obey Him." He was thereupon sentenced to three times five days' solitary confinement in a dark cell, on bread and water. The successive periods of five days' darkness were separated by one day's imprisonment in the

light.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.7*

At the close of this sentence he was asked by his friends how he had it in prison. "Oh," said he, "it was somewhat lonesome at times, but I prayed to the Lord, and sang praises to Him, and so my heart was glad."*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.8*

AN EXCELLENT CHARACTER

It should be stated that the military authorities gave the young man an excellent character. His reputation for activity and soldierly ability was good. The officer said that he was the best man in the company. At target practice he proved himself superior to all the rest. The colonel who had to send a report of the case to the King talked with him, and told what a good report he had heard of him from the officers, and said, "You are a clever marksman, can you shoot as well at the Germans, when you get in the battle?"*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.9*

"No," was the reply, "I cannot shoot or kill a fellow-men, since God's law forbids it."*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.10*

"Oh, yes," said the colonel; "I believe you are a faithful man to do what you believe to be right. You will fear God, and live for Him. I have nothing bad to report about you, but I must write that you are deluded."*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.11*

Several times was young Rasmussen before the military court for insubordination, the only charge being that he would not work on Sabbath, and as often must he undergo punishment, so that as an Aarhus (Denmark) paper said in giving an account of this case, he spent the greater part of the summer in discharging penalties, and these were naturally made more severe one after the other. Dark cells and bread and water were everyday affairs with him. The closeness with which one punishment followed another, depended only on whether he came out of prison the first or the last day of the week; for as surely as Saturday came, was there the refusal to work, and the swiftly following sentence.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.12*

“ACCOUNTED MAD”

At last he was sent to the insane asylum, to be kept under observation for three months, to see if he was of sound mind. Here his surroundings were by no means pleasant, but the Lord whom he served did not forsake him, and he always maintained his courage. Whenever his friend saw him in the intervals of his imprisonment, he seemed glad and happy in the Lord, and had not a hard word to say of those at whose hands he was made to suffer.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.13*

In the insane hospital the doctor had naturally many talks with him, but could find in him nothing different from other men, except his loyalty to what the Bible says, and his confidence and happiness in the Lord. The doctor's report of his first examination ran something as follows:—*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 391.14*

“The patient was sent in for examination as to a state of mind; because he, as an Adventist, had ever since his call to military service refused to work on Saturday, and had therefore undergone one punishment after another. His behavior in the hospital has been good, and one cannot know any other abnormal symptom in him than his defense of the sacredness of Saturday, which he supports with innumerable texts from the Bible.”*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.1*

As with Daniel, the only fault found in him was concerning the law of his God.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.2*

The 2nd of last October he was sent back to the army with the declaration that it was perfectly sane, whereupon the old history began to repeat itself. Friday evening soon came, and, as before, he respectfully but firmly refused to continue his work. Judgment followed quick and strong, and twice more was he obliged to suffer for his faithful “disobedience,” each time five times five days in the dark cell, on bread and water, the last time without any bed. In all this time he uttered no complaint, only expressing the hope that he might soon receive his final sentence of continuous imprisonment.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.3*

Finally his case was settled, and he received a sentence of eight

months' hard labor in the penitentiary. This was less than he expected. From the time that he was taken to the prison, until, a little less than two months later, he was pardoned on the king's eightieth birthday, nothing was known of him except that the inspector said he must learn to obey, and he had no doubt but that they would succeed in teaching him, and that in the prison he would be obliged to work on Sabbath, or else be punished according to the prison regulations.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.4*

It transpires that on its refusal to work on the Sabbath, he received the mildest punishment prescribed for such an offence. Instead of being flogged, he was obliged to spend the Sabbath in a dark cell or hole, where, as it was winter, and there was no fire, he suffered much from the cold. Now, however, he is free from prison and from all further military service; and as none of the things he endured could spoil his peace, it may well be believed that he is now glad in the Lord, to whose service he is more than ever devoted.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.5*

WHO WAS DISOBEDIENT?

We have headed this narrative "A Lesson in Obedience," and such it is. The military authorities thought all the time that they were engaged in teaching the young recruit obedience to order; but the fact was that it was he who was giving them a practical lesson in obedience, which most of them were too dull to appreciate, their senses having been blunted by their military training.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.6*

It is true that Rasmussen was technically disobedient, but that which in his case was called "disobedience" was the highest kind of obedience. A writer for one of the Danish newspapers well said: "I cherish the highest respect for this young man. The faithfulness and integrity which he exhibits is so rare that it ought to be rewarded by some other means than the House of Corrections." In reality it was the military authorities who were disobedient, for the law which says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is for all, and the king on his throne is under the same obligation to keep it that the peasant is.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.7*

That Rasmussen's case is only faintly suggestive of what may yet follow in multiplied instances in every land, is indicated by the following taken from the Aarhus *Folkeblad* February 19:—*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.8*

“One cannot comfort himself with the thought that this is an isolated case, for there will soon be many, I know of a certainty. We really come to the heart of the matter only when we see that such a man can come into a yet more serious situation in time of war. For according to what I have been able to learn by conversations with men belonging to the Seventh-day Adventists, they will absolutely refuse to go against an enemy with weapons in hand. They will hold themselves strictly to the fifth [sixth] commandment, ‘Thou shalt not kill.’ They will allow themselves to be killed, but they will not kill. If this is correct, and I believe it is, then these men are useless as soldiers, and may, if war should break out, come into the most deplorable condition in that they may be condemned to death, and put others in the painful situation of being obliged to pronounce so hard a sentence upon them.”*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.9*

THE GOD OF WAR

When one stops to consider how the war spirit is dominating the nations of earth, and what its nature is, it will be apparent that there are indeed “perilous times” ahead, and not far distant. The demon whom men call “the god of war” is stern, harsh, unyielding, unrelenting, and mercilessly cruel. The groans of the wounded and dying, and the wails of widows and orphans, are music to his ears. Men call him Mars, but he is well represented by the ancient Moloch, that brazen image into whose red-hot arms living children were flung, while the beating of drums and the blare of trumpets drowned their dying cries, or mingled with them to work the multitudes up to the highest pitch of frenzy.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.10*

The Danish people are as kind and courteous and gentle a people as can be found in the world. Moreover all those who came in contact with young Rasmussen liked him personally, and the officers praised his efficiency and willingness, yet the worship of the military demon begets so false a conception of duty, that not one of

them would hesitate in obedience to inflict upon him any sort of punishment. Why?-Because in their minds human Government is greater than God. Young Rasmussen was not punished because the officers had any ill will to him, nor because they were hard-hearted men. Far from it. On the contrary, it caused them pain, and they did it at the sacrifice of personal feelings and to what they conceived to be their duty. The same thing would be done in any other country in the world, only the punishment might be much more vigorous. The kings and rulers of earth have set themselves against God, and have assumed the right to set aside His law, which says, "Thou shalt not kill," and as a matter of course the other portions of that law are as lightly regarded by them.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.11*

A FALLACY

This case shows the fallacy of another idea, that is entertained by many, namely, that religious persecution must be prompted by hatred of the religious principles of the ones persecuted. In this case those at whose hands Rasmussen suffered had no religious bias. They cared more for the Sunday than for the Sabbath. It was absolutely immaterial to them what religion the soldiers professed, or if they professed none at all. The only thing that concerned them was, to secure implicit and unquestioning obedience to the regulations of the army. If a man disregards them, the fact that he does so in obedience to God's law is not for a moment taken into consideration; punishment must follow to the bitter end.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.12*

MILITARISM ABOVE GOD

"But there must be discipline in the army, or else its efficiency is at an end; and if partiality is shown there will be an end of discipline," will be urged by many, and not last, by any means, by men who occupy the places of influence in the church. Think of the wickedness of such a defense! God and His law must be considered of secondary importance to the military machine! It is of more importance that the army should be maintained, than that God should be regarded! The mere statement of the case is sufficient to

show that it is as gross paganism as ever existed. What hope can there be of peace on earth as long as such principles rule?*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.13*

The situation will be worse in the future than it has ever been in the past, for war is now sanctioned by the professed ministers of the Gospel, as it has never been before. It is so easy for the rulers to raise the cry of “humanity” in justification of any war, or else there is always that magic word “patriotism;” and when a country is “Christian,” it is readily argued that to defend its “honor” is a Christian act; so that he who will refuse to disobey God’s law, “Thou shalt not kill,” will be condemned as a traitor to God in his country, and that even by the ministers of religion.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.14*

PAGANISM

Is it not time that the question were again asked: “How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God serve Him, and if Baal, then serve him.” In so-called “Christian” countries the worst sort of paganism is assuming overwhelming proportions. The great mass of people seem to think that when “Government” (which is in the main only another name for the army) commands disobedience of God’s law, there is no alternative but to disobey it; and those who refuse to transgress God’s law are branded as lawless and disobedient. What is it but heathenism thus to ignore God, and to set the military god above him?*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.15*

Thank God that there are still faithful witnesses to the truth, lone voices in the desert, saying, “Behold your God!” When the testing time comes the single voices will be multiplied by thousands, whose quiet lives of humble obedience to God’s law will speak louder than any words, and will result in bringing many from the camp of Satan, to enlist under the banner of the Prince of Peace.*ARSH June 21, 1898, page 392.16*

October 11, 1898

“The Two Covenants” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 75, 41.

EJW

E. J. Waggoner

“These are the two covenants.” *Galatians 4:24*. What are the two covenants?—The two women, Hagar and Sarah; for we read that Hagar is Mount Sinai, “which gendereth to bondage.” That is, just as Hagar could not bring forth any other kind of children than slaves, so the law, even the law that God spoke from Sinai, can not beget free men. It can do nothing but hold them in bondage. “For by the law is the knowledge of sin.” The same is true of the covenant from Sinai, for it consisted merely of the promise of the people to keep that law, and had, therefore, no more power to make them free than the law itself had. Nay, rather, it gendered to bondage, since their making it was simply a promise to make themselves righteous by their own works, and man in himself is “without strength.” *ARSH October 11, 1898, page 647.1*

“Then did not God himself lead them into bondage?”—Not by any means; since he did not induce them to make that covenant at Sinai. Four hundred and thirty years before that time he had made a covenant with Abraham, which was sufficient for all purposes. That covenant was confirmed in Christ, and, therefore, was a covenant from above. See *John 8:23*. It promised righteousness as a free gift of God through faith, and it included all nations. All the miracles that God had wrought in delivering the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage were but demonstrations of his power to deliver them and us from the bondage of sin. Yes, the deliverance from Egypt was itself a demonstration not only of God’s power, but also of his desire to lead them from the bondage of sin,—that bondage in which the covenant from Sinai holds men,—because Hagar, who is the covenant from Sinai, was an Egyptian. *ARSH October 11, 1898, page 647.2*

The fact that the children of Israel, in their self-sufficiency rashly took the whole responsibility upon themselves, does not prove that

God led them into making that covenant, but the contrary. He was leading them out of bondage, not into it, and the apostle plainly tells us that covenant from Sinai was nothing but bondage.*ARSH October 11, 1898, page 647.3*

Note the statement which the apostle makes when speaking of the two women, Hagar and Sarah: "These are the two covenants." So then the two covenants existed in every essential particular in the days of Abraham. Even so they do to-day; for the Scripture says now as well as then, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son." We see then that the two covenants are not matters of *time*, but of *condition*. Let no one flatter himself that he can not be under the old covenant, because the time for that is passed. The time for that is passed only in the sense that "the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries." *1 Peter 4:3. ARSH October 11, 1898, page 647.4*

The difference between the two covenants is just the difference between a freewoman and a slave. Hagar's children, no matter how many she might have had, would have been slaves, while those of Sarah would necessarily be free. So the covenant from Sinai holds all who adhere to it in bondage "under the law;" while the covenant from above gives freedom, not freedom from obedience to the law, but freedom from disobedience to it. The freedom is not found *away from* the law, but *in* the law. Christ redeems from the curse, which is the transgression of the law. He redeems us from the curse, that the blessing may come on us; and the blessing is obedience to the law. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." *Psalms 119:1*. This blessedness is freedom. "I will walk at liberty; for I seek Thy precepts." *Verse 45. ARSH October 11, 1898, page 647.5*

The difference between the two covenants may be put briefly thus: In the covenant from Sinai we ourselves have to do with the law alone, while in the covenant from above, we have the law in Christ. In the first instance it is death to us, since the law is sharper than any two-edged sword, and we are not able to handle it without fatal results; but in the second instance we have the law "in the hand of a

mediator.” In the one case it is what we can do; in the other case it is what the Spirit of God can do. Bear in mind that there is not the slightest question in the whole epistle to the Galatians as to whether or not the law should be kept. The only question is, How shall it be done? Is it to be our own doing, so that the reward shall not be of grace but of debt? or is it to be God working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure?*ARSH October 11, 1898, page 647.6*

Sarah answers to the covenant which is from above, because she is free. But the freedom which that covenant gives is the freedom of the Spirit, for Isaac was born of the Spirit. See *Galatians 4:29*. “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” *2 Corinthians 3:17*. “If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” *Galatians 5:18*. But this does not mean that the Spirit gives one license to break the law; for “the law is spiritual.” *Romans 7:14*. There is no liberty in sin, and “sin is the transgression of the law.” So the liberty of the covenant from above is that perfect liberty that belongs alone to those who are law-abiding. We become law-abiding only by having the law written in our hearts by the Spirit.*ARSH October 11, 1898, page 647.7*

“Stand fast therefor.” Stand where?—“In the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.” And what freedom is that?—It is the freedom of Christ himself, whose delight was in the law of the Lord, because it was in His heart. *Psalms 40:8*. “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” *Romans 8:2*. We stand only by faith.*ARSH October 11, 1898, page 648.1*

Let it not be imagined that there is any trace of bondage in this freedom. It is liberty of soul, liberty of thought, as well as liberty of action. It is not that we are simply given the ability to keep the law, but we are given the mind that finds delight in doing it. It is not that we comply with the law because we see no other way of escape from punishment; that would be galling bondage. It is from such bondage that God’s covenant releases us. No; the promise of God, when accepted, puts the mind of the Spirit into us, so that we find the highest pleasure in obedience to all the precepts of God’s word. The soul is as free as a bird soaring above the mountain-tops. It is the glorious liberty of the children of God, who have the full range of “the breadth, and length, and depth, and height” of God’s universe.

It is the liberty of those who do not have to be watched, but who can be trusted anywhere, since their every step is but the movement of God's own holy law. Why be content with bondage, when such limitless freedom is yours? The prison doors are open; walk out into God's freedom.*ARSH October 11, 1898, page 648.2*

October 25, 1898

“The Secret of the North” The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 75, 43.

EJW

E. J. Waggoner

Present Truth.

The magnetic needle points to the north. Everybody knows the facts, but nobody knows why. There is a mysterious attraction in the north. Mysterious indeed; for the Hebrew word for “north” means, “concealed,” “hidden.” What is this power, which men arbitrarily call “magnetism,” which fills the whole earth, and by which matter is kept from becoming a chaotic mass and going to destruction?—It is God’s own personal influence, for “there is no power but of God.” His secret dwelling-place is “Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge.” *Psalms 48:2, 3*. Lucifer, in his mad ambition to set his throne above the stars of God, and to be like the Most High, said: “I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.” *Isaiah 14:12-14*. ARSH October 25, 1898, page 679.1

“He stretched out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.” *Job 26:7*. The earth hangs upon nothing, upheld by that mighty power that emanates from “the secret place of the Most High,”—the north. That power pervades every particle of matter in the universe, and holds it in its place. In Christ “are all things created, ... for He is before all things, and in Him all things consists,” or “cohere.” *Colossians 1:16, 17*. He upholds “all things by the word of His power.” *Hebrews 1:3*. ARSH October 25, 1898, page 679.2

The mind cannot grasp such mighty power. It is but the working out of “the love of God which passeth knowledge,” which is devoted to the well-being of mankind. “The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord” (*Psalms 33:5*), and it is his loving-kindness that draws us to him. All the force in nature, by whatever name men know it, whether

cohesion, chemical attraction, magnetism, gravitation, or what not, is simply the influence of the Spirit of God, from whose presence none can flee, whether he ascend to heaven, or descend into the depths of the earth, or dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea.*ARSH*
October 25, 1898, page 679.3

November 8, 1898

“The Open Grave” The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 75, 45.

EJW

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Present Truth.

In the city of Hanover, Germany, there is in one of the churchyards a grave which attracts the attention of hundreds of visitors every year. Pictures of it are to be found for sale in nearly every stationer's shop, and it is known far and wide as “The open grave.” The history of it is in brief this:—*ARSH November 8, 1898, page 711.1*

More than a hundred years ago a woman was buried there, and the following inscription (whether by her own direction or not, I do not know) was placed on the lowermost stone of the tomb: “This grave, purchased for eternity, must never be opened.” *ARSH November 8, 1898, page 711.2*

The grave, as will be seen from the illustration, was covered with heavy stones, the top one being a solid block that doubtless weighs not less than a ton, and all the stones were firmly bound together with iron bands. But no human device can hinder the working of the power of life. Either a seed fell into the grave before it was closed up, or else a shoot from a tree penetrated the grave from beneath, and in obedience to the law of life, proceeded to make its way to the light. *ARSH November 8, 1898, page 711.3*

Slowly and imperceptibly, but with irresistible power it forced its way between the huge stones, and burst every iron band. Now there is not a single stone left in its original position, although no hand of man has ever presumed to try to move them. *ARSH November 8, 1898, page 711.4*

A vigorous birch-tree is now growing from the open grave which was to remain closed to all eternity. The tree is flattened where it comes in contact with the huge covering stone, so that it fills the

entire aide of the grave, but immediately above the block it assumes the natural, round shape, and is about fifteen inches in diameter.*ARSH November 8, 1898, page 711.5*

There is in the same churchyard another grave that has been opened in the same manner by a small locust tree, but it does not attract the attention that the first one does, since it has no inscription and no iron clamps. Both however teach the same thing, namely, the power of life.*ARSH November 8, 1898, page 711.6*

How easily the voice of God sounding from heaven can rend all the tombs! That voice which at the last day will shake the earth, and open every grave, is but the same voice which in the beginning said, Let the earth bring forth grass and trees; and although no sound of it is heard, that Word is able, as we have seen to break every bond. That is the power of the resurrection.*ARSH November 8, 1898, page 711.7*

But the power of the resurrection of the last day is only the power which Jesus Christ, who is risen from the dead, exerts in every believer. He is near to every soul, with all the power of His resurrection life. "The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the Word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." *Romans 10:8, 9.**ARSH November 8, 1898, page 711.8*

That word, which at the last will open every grave, and whose power is shown in the bursting of the iron bands that were designed to keep the Hanover grave closed, is able to burst every bond that would hold any soul down to this earth and its groveling life. Jesus still comes as of old, anointed with the Holy Spirit, "to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Who will listen to Him? "Hear, and your soul shall live."*ARSH November 8, 1898, page 711.9*

November 29, 1898

“Imagination Is Idolatry” The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 75, 48.

EJW

E. J. Waggoner

Present Truth.

Imagination is not a gift of God. It is the perversion of God's gift. It is the result of refusing to let God Himself direct the faculties which He has given us, and trying to direct them ourselves. One has no right to imagine anything. Imagination is but an *ignis fatuus* that leads men into a fog. The first chapter of Romans tells what it does for men. They had the knowledge of God,—that is, of the truth, for God had showed it unto them. But they did not like to retain God in their knowledge; they did not like to admit that they were not wise in themselves. So they proceeded to find out the truth by their own “reason.” But God is the only source of reason, and “reasoning” without Him is only vain imagination. They saw wisdom and power displayed in the things that are made, and which are growing. But they would not acknowledge that it was God's power and wisdom that were manifested there, for in that case they would have been obliged to acknowledge that it was only by His power and wisdom that they themselves lived and acted and thought. This they would not do, for they professed themselves to be wise; they put themselves in the place of God. Then there was nothing left for them but to say that the things that were made were God, thus changing the truth of God into a lie. Instead of seeing God in everything, they imagined that everything was God, because they rejected the truth to begin with. The truth is that God's power and divinity are to be seen working in everything that is made; the lie is to say that the power and wisdom originate in the things that are made whether it be men or the grass of the field. When men substituted their own imaginations for pure reason, it naturally followed that they gave those imaginations visible form, and so image worship was the result. Imagination is simply the forming of an image in one's own mind. The image that is formed is only the imagination of the heart made visible. To make images is idolatry,

whether they be formed by the hands, or only retained in the heart.*ARSH November 29, 1898, page 762.1*

The work of the Gospel is to cast down imaginations. "Every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God," must be overthrown, and every thought must be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Imagination has no place in God's work. He deals in facts, not in fancies. The gospel is a fact. There is no speculation about it. We have only to believe what is real, that which has been done and finished.*ARSH November 29, 1898, page 762.2*

Think what heights of knowledge we all might have attained to even in our short lives, and with our meager advantages, if we had never learned anything but the truth. We might not have been able to make much of a display, but we would have had something of solid value. One bag full of wheat is worth more than a thousand bags full of air. That which made Jesus of Nazareth superior to all the men of His day was the fact that He held Himself rigidly to the truth. Thank God that even though we have turned every one to his own way, and have filled ourselves with winds of teaching, it is never too late to learn the truth. If we come to Jesus in humility, He will transform us by the renewing of our minds, even giving us His own perfect mind.*ARSH November 29, 1898, page 762.3*

Jesus Christ is the wisdom of God, and he is of God made unto us wisdom as well as righteousness. God's Word is the only source of wisdom; "for the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Now since imagination is the deadly foe of the truth and of wisdom, it is evident that in dealing with the Scriptures, above all things, every trace of imagination should be rigidly excluded. Nothing of self must be allowed any place. We must hold ourselves as nothing, not bringing to the study of the Word any preconceived ideas, or rather, what men are pleased to call ideas. We must be silent before the Lord, believing that every word of God is absolute truth, and allowing Him to fill us. Then there will be no mistakes. Then there will be no danger that we shall fall into error. All who do this will see the truth, and will be "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Only in this course is there safety. In thus humbly

submitting to be taught of God, not presuming to originate a single thought for ourselves, there are possibilities of almost infinite wisdom for the poorest and humblest souls. They who acknowledge God as the One who is all in all, have access to “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” *ARSH November 29, 1898, page 762.4*

“Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.” *1 Corinthians 4:18. ARSH November 29, 1898, page 762.5*

